

To promote and actively practice democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, with particular protection for minority groups, in all states in the region.

To respect and establish the formal separation of political and religious institutions so that each can freely perform its own tasks and respect the functions of the other.

To regard religious communities, which possess both infrastructure and expertise in providing social services to the people and which have an essential role in protecting the social security of all people, as legitimate partners in the work of reconstruction and development.

To provide support for the development of strong civil society through adopting appropriate laws, financial regulations, and other policies that will provide the necessary environment for religious communities and other civic organizations to thrive.

To allow free practice of religious belief for all persons and to ensure the availability of religious service in the military and other social institutions.

To promote policies of economic development that are sustainable and humane and can ensure economic security for all people in the region. Integration into broader European structures is an important dimension of this process.

To adopt and implement laws on restitution of property to religious communities that was nationalized or expropriated by previous regimes. This property is essential for religious communities to retain their independence from political control and to carry out their religious and social mission.

To develop media practices that do not promote division, mistrust and hostility among peoples, but can contribute to building healthy democratic societies. In this regard we call for greater access for all religious communities to the media in their respective countries.

#### OPENING RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

As representatives of our respective religious communities, we know that there is no alternative to dialogue both within and among our communities, and we commit ourselves to take the following steps to promote dialogue and cooperation among ourselves and to enhance the role of our communities as important social institutions in our societies:

We will seek partnerships with other civic and social organizations in our societies to carry out social welfare activities for which we share a common concern.

We will educate all persons to understand and respect our different faith traditions in order to prevent ignorance and fear from once again fueling violence. To this end we must ensure that school curriculums and textbooks treat each religious tradition in a way that individuals from that tradition can recognize themselves. We will also provide basic information about each religious community and organize teacher exchanges in our own religious institutions to promote better understanding and mutual respect.

We commit ourselves to pray for and to promote tolerance, coexistence and peace both within our own communities and for our brothers and sisters in other communities. We also pledge ourselves to promote a climate of peace within our communities by stressing to our own officials that preaching must not interpret our own faith by attacking others. We must show respect to others by not using inflammatory language in our public statements.

We encourage the formation of inter-religious working committees in each state to

foster contact and dialogue among the communities as a first step towards practical cooperation.

We will work to take part in joint public meetings and visits by religious leaders within our own states and around the region to promote the idea of tolerance and common living among communities and peoples.

We pledge ourselves to find the means to provide mutual assistance for those who suffer in whatever way in our societies. In these efforts, we want to state that majority religious communities have a particular responsibility to protect the human and religious rights of smaller or minority communities in their areas.

Our region continues to face considerable challenges in the process of reconstruction, reconciliation and development. We believe that religious communities can play a vital role in this process, and we are thankful to God that we have had the opportunity to meet together and discuss such critical issues, and we express our appreciation to the World Conference on Religion and Peace for convening this important meeting. We commit ourselves to pursuing contact and dialogue with each other both within the states of South Eastern Europe and across the region as a whole for the purpose of building active instruments of interreligious cooperation, and we ask for the World Conference on Religion and Peace to continue to assist us in facilitating this process of building cooperation in our region.

#### FORUM OF SOUTH EASTERN EUROPEAN RELIGIOUS LEADERS, WORLD CONFERENCE ON RELIGION AND PEACE

##### PARTICIPANTS LIST

##### Islamic

Mr. Mehmet Emin Aga, Mufti of Xanthi, Greece.

Dr. Rexhep Bojaj, Mufti and President, Islamic Community of Kosovo.

H.E. Dr. Mustafa Cerić, Reis-ul-Ulema, Islamic Community of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Mr. Idriz Demirović, Mufti and President, Islamic Community of Montenegro.

Mr. Moustafa Alich Hadji, Grand Mufti, Islamic Community of Bulgaria.

Mr. Aziz Hasanović, Senior Imam, Zagreb, Croatia.

Mr. Hamdija Jusufspahić, Mufti, Islamic Community of Serbia.

H.E. Mr. Sulejman Red'epi, Reis-ul-Ulema, Islamic Community of Macedonia.

Mr. Selim Stafa, Deputy Chairman, Islamic Community of Albania.

Mr. Ibrahim Serif, Mufti of Komotini, Greece.

Mr. Muamer Zukorlić, Mufti, Islamic Community of Sand'ak.

##### Orthodox

His Beatitude Anastasios, Archbishop of Tirana and All Albania, Albanian Orthodox Church.

Very Rev. Ieronim Cretu, Superior of Romanian Orthodox Church in Jerusalem.

Prof. Georgios Filias, Professor, Theological Faculty, Greek Orthodox Church.

H.E. Timotej Jovanovski, Metropolitan of Debar-Ki-evo, Macedonian Orthodox Church.

H.E. Nikolaj Mrla, Metropolitan of Dabrobosnia, Serbian Orthodox Church.

His Grace Artemije Radosavljević, Bishop of Raska-Prizren, Serbian Orthodox Church.

H.E. Gligori Stefanov, Metropolitan of Veliko Tirnovo, Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

##### Roman Catholic

Fr. George Frendo, Vicar General, Archdiocese of Durres-Tirana, Albania.

Dr. Karl Ocviik, Professor, Theological Faculty, Archdiocese of Ljubljana, Slovenia.

H.E. Vinko Cardinal Puljić, Archbishop of Vrhbosna (Sarajevo).

Msgr. Marko Sopi, Bishop of Prizren, Kosovo.

##### Jewish

Rabbi Menachem Hacohen, Great Rabbi, Jewish Community of Romania.

Mr. Emil Kalo, President of Organization of Jews in Bulgaria ñ Shalom.

Dr. Ognjen Kraus, President of Coordinating Board of Jewish Communities in Croatia.

Mr. Aca Singer, President of Federation of Jewish Communities in Yugoslavia.

##### Protestant

Dr. Peter Kuzmić, President, Council of Evangelical Churches in Croatia.●

#### RESTORATION OF LITHUANIA'S INDEPENDENCE

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, on February 6 of this year, in the Divine Providence Church, in Southfield, Michigan, several hundred Lithuanian Americans will gather to mark the tenth anniversary of the restoration of Lithuania's independence. Joined by Lithuania's ambassador to the United States, His Excellency, Stasys Sakalauskas, they will be celebrating their nation's original, modern independence day, February 16, 1918, as well as the events of March 1, 1990, the date on which Lithuania was finally and irrevocably released from the grip of Soviet communism.

Michigan's Lithuanian-American community also will celebrate the perseverance and sacrifice of their people, which enabled them to achieve the freedom they now enjoy.

I have reviewed the bare facts before: On March 11, 1990, the newly elected Lithuanian Parliament, fulfilling its electoral mandate from the people of Lithuania, declared the restoration of Lithuania's independence and the establishment of a democratic state. This marked a great moment for Lithuania and for lovers of freedom around the globe.

The people of Lithuania endured 51 years of oppressive foreign occupation. Operating under cover of the infamous Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939, Soviet troops marched into Lithuania, beginning an occupation characterized by communist dictatorship and cultural genocide.

Even in the face of this oppression, the Lithuanian people were not defeated. They assisted their oppressors and kept their culture, their faith and their dream of independence very much alive even during the hardest times.

The people of Lithuania were even able to mobilize and sustain a non-violent movement for social and political change, a movement which came to be known as Sajudis. This people's movement helped guarantee a peaceful transition to independence through full participation in democratic elections on February 24, 1990.

Unfortunately, as is so often the case, peace and freedom had to be purchased again and again. In January of

1991, ten months after restoration of independence, the people and government of Lithuania faced a bloody assault by foreign troops intent on overthrowing their democratic institutions. Lithuanians withstood this assault, maintaining their independence and their democracy. Their successful use of non-violent resistance to an oppressive regime is an inspiration to all.

Lithuania's integration into the international community has been swift and sure. On September 17, 1991, the reborn nation became a member of the United Nations and is a signatory to a number of its organizations and other international agreements. It also is a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and the Council of Europe.

Lithuania is an associate member of the European Union, has applied for NATO membership and is currently negotiating for membership in the WTO, OECD and other Western organizations.

The United States established diplomatic relations with Lithuania on July 28, 1992. But our nation never really broke with the government and people of Lithuania. The United States never recognized the forcible incorporation of Lithuania into the U.S.S.R., and views the present Government of Lithuania as a legal continuation of the inter-war republic. Indeed, for over fifty years the United States maintained a bipartisan consensus that our nation would refuse to recognize the forcible incorporation of Lithuania into the former Soviet Union.

America's relations with Lithuania continue to be strong, friendly and mutually beneficial. Lithuania has enjoyed Most-Favored-Nation (MFN) treatment with the United States since December, 1991. Through 1996, the United States has committed over \$100 million to Lithuania's economic and political transformation and to address humanitarian needs. In 1994, the United States and Lithuania signed an agreement of bilateral trade and intellectual property protection, and in 1997 a bilateral investment treaty.

In 1998 the United States and Lithuania signed The Baltic Charter Partnership. That charter recalls the history of American relations with the area and underscores our "real, profound, and enduring" interest in the security and independence of the three Baltic states. As the Charter also notes, our interest in a Europe whole and free will not be ensured until Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are secure.

Mr. President, I commend the people of Lithuania for their courage and perseverance in using peaceful means to regain their independence. I pledge to work with my colleagues to continue working to secure the freedom and independence of Lithuania and its Baltic neighbors, and I join with the peo-

ple of Lithuania as they celebrate their independence.●

#### RECOGNITION OF THE NACHES VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CLASS

● Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, as the Senate prepares to debate the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in the coming weeks, one of the topics we will no doubt address is this issue of school safety.

I want to recognize the extraordinary efforts of a group of students and teachers in eastern Washington in addressing violent crime in their community and making their school a safer place for all students. The Leadership Class at Naches Valley High School has done an excellent job at incorporating creative solutions and programs to curb gang activity and encourage fellow students to do well in school. For their efforts, I am presenting these students and their teacher, Mr. Sanford Jetton with my "Innovation in Education" award.

Naches Valley is a rural school district at the foot of the eastern side of the Cascade Mountains. For years, Naches Valley High School reflected the small community values with little conflict between students. In 1996, it discovered it was not immune from the problems that are common-place in most large urban schools—gangs, drugs, depression, crime, to name a few.

When the high school had its first incident of gang violence, students in the Leadership class were both frightened and angry. While such a reaction would be expected, their response was anything but typical. Not only did the students confront the gang members, challenging them to be positive contributors to the school atmosphere, but they proactively worked with their principal, their Leadership teacher Sanford Jetton, the Mayor, and the deputies from the sheriff's department to address the problem.

The students helped write a town ordinance which declared the local park to be part of the school grounds for an hour before and an hour after school, or whenever that park is being used for school activities. This allows for disruptive students to be dealt with both by law enforcement and the school's own "zero tolerance" gang policy.

As a result of this direct intervention, most of the gang members relinquished that affiliation and eventually graduated from Naches. In addition, there have been no further incidences of gang violence at Naches Valley High School since 1996.

The Leadership class did not stop with the problem of gang violence. Its members looked for innovative ways to promote drug and violence prevention through school and community service. The list of student-initiated accomplishments is quite impressive:

The class established a Student Accountability Board (S.A.B.) which provides alternative consequences for students pulled over by the sheriff's office for traffic violations. The S.A.B. has resulted in a 50 percent reduction in traffic citations. Seat belt use among students has also risen from 63 percent in 1997 to 93 percent in 1999.

Working with the University of Washington, the class prepared a suicide awareness program which has since spread to six other schools.

The class initiated a "Student Sharing Solutions" program which teams up schools throughout the Yakima Valley for such events as a countrywide graffiti paint-out.

The class has also taken the lead in such projects as replenishing local food banks and in raising money for a fellow NVHS student who was severely injured in a car crash and whose family has no medical insurance.

These young leaders, and their teacher have been recognized in their community at problem solvers and generous servants. In 1998, the Naches Valley Leadership Class received the Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce Service Award.

As the Senate prepares to take on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, I believe we in Congress would do well to trust students and teachers, like Sanford Jetton and his Leadership class with more freedom and flexibility to create these types of innovative programs.

That is why I have introduced my Straight A's education bill to give parents, teachers, principals, superintendents and school board members with the flexibility to make the best decisions about how to educate our children and provide measures to keep states accountable for the results.●

#### SUPER BOWL CHAMPION, ST. LOUIS RAMS

● Mr. FITZGERALD. Mr. President, it is with great pride that I rise today with my distinguished colleagues to support the pending resolution and express my sincere congratulations to the Super Bowl XXXIV Champion St. Louis Rams. In the aftermath of a heart-stopping NFC division victory over the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and an outstanding regular season record of 13 wins and 3 losses, the St. Louis Rams increased their intensity to win Super Bowl XXXIV, bringing home the most prized possession in the National Football League, the Lombardi Trophy. In an extraordinary effort and show of heart, the Rams countered the incredible second-half push by the Tennessee Titans in a game that more than lived up to its billing of "Super" and made history on Sunday, January 30, 2000, by pulling out a thrilling victory by the score of 23-16, becoming the Super Bowl XXXIV Champions.